

*To improve the
quality of life for
adults having mental
illness, alcoholism,
drug addiction, or
gambling addiction by
promoting their health and well
being, fostering their self-
sufficiency and protecting those
who are at risk.*

For more information about the
Delaware Division of Substance
Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH)
call (302) 255-9399
or visit our web site at:
[www.state.de.us/dhss/dsamh/
dmhome.htm](http://www.state.de.us/dhss/dsamh/dmhome.htm)

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The Road Toward Cultural Competence



**Delaware Health and Social
Services**

**Division of Substance
Abuse and Mental Health**

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What is Cultural Competence?

Cultural competence is a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals that enable them to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

A culturally competent system acknowledges and incorporates the following at all levels:

- Valuing diversity
- Cultural self-assessment
- Vigilance toward the dynamics that result from cultural differences
- Expansion of cultural knowledge
- Adaptation of services to meet culturally-unique needs

(Cross et.al., 1989)

Cultural Competence Beliefs and Values “Our Way of Doing Business”

- DSAMH acknowledges that a person’s culture is relevant to their recovery and the services they receive.
- DSAMH believes that culturally sensitive practices can help reduce barriers to effective care.
- DSAMH believes that cultural competence facilitates individualized care to the consumer.
- DSAMH respects individual differences and recognizes cultural variability as a critical component of cultural competence.
- DSAMH understands that consumer and family satisfaction with service provision is an important indicator of cultural competence.

Promotion of cultural competence and cultural sensitivity is encouraged in many areas:

- Inclusion in agency strategic plan, goals, and objectives
- Integration of cultural competence into training and in-service curricula
- Inclusion of cultural competence in contract performance measures and RFP language
- Collaborative efforts with stakeholders, recipients, families, advocates and policy makers
- Equitable distribution of resources
- Promotion of service access to all populations with specific attention given to traditionally underserved populations

